

Travelers Championship

Friday, June 23, 2017

Jordan Spieth

Quick Quotes

Q. Round of 69, not the fireworks of yesterday's 63, how do you reflect on this one?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, it was a battle. I was just a little off today. You know, I didn't expect to be on to the same level as a 63, but I just got a little bit -- the swing was just -- it's close. It was just kind of an off day, and I'm glad I was able to still shoot 1-under with an off round, and we'll just go back and recognize that we probably need to be close to doubling this score for the rest of the tournament in order to win. But, yeah, still in a good position.

Q. Started the round at the 10th, made the birdie at 12, and the double out of bounds there on 13. But you get to 15, yesterday you hit rescue off the tee, didn't go for the green. Today you did. Just explain the thinking.

JORDAN SPIETH: It was a good 3-wood number today, and if I went long it was okay. Yesterday you didn't want to be long. All I needed to do was keep it in between the bunker and the green. Obviously it was pretty fortunate for it to bounce up and stay on that tier right there. Led to a lot easier two-putt. But I think we've played that hole well both days. It all depends on the pin location on what we'll do.

Q. A long putt you holed here at the third. How did the putt generally feel? Was it coming around?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, it's close. I would say it was about the same yesterday. This was a beautiful putt though. I had to cast it out on the right, trying to give it perfect speed to take a big turn right here. With a couple feet to go, I wasn't sure if that was going to get there, and Wesley was on a better angle, and said bingo with about three feet to go and that let me know it was going to go in. That one was fun for sure.

Q. Your caddie Michael told you when he arrived this course suits you down to the ground. You particularly like the back nine, why?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think it's a very exciting nine holes. Overall, the entire course suits us. You've got to work both ball flights. You've got to kind of be fearless in playing different shots. You really have to. You can't get out there and just step and hit just draws the whole day. It forces you to hit different shots. I was a little aggressive on the greens today. That was my one thing is Poa Annua historically isn't my best surface, so I have to watch my speed on Poa Annua.



I tried to force a couple, and it led to me running a few by. I was fortunate to not have three-putts and knock in the second one.

So you're going to miss putts from inside ten feet out here. I don't think anybody will go clean here this week. So I think not letting that bother you and not forcing anything this week will be key.

Q. I am with the tournament leader. Jordan, 1-under today. Looked like the conditions made it tougher today?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think as we turned and the winds started to pick up a little bit, I would agree with that. Early in the round it was pretty gettable. We had a little rainfall this morning that we had allowed approach shots to stop quickly. I was a little tentative to start. I had a double cross off the tee on the par-5 and made double, but responded nicely. Things were just a little bit off today.

I didn't feel like it was much harder than yesterday. Just had an off round. I was able to hold it at 1-under, and instead of falling way back, probably be a couple back going into the weekend, but in a good spot.

Q. Couple more putts today than yesterday. How is your comfort level on the greens here at TPC River Highlands?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think my speed has been pretty solid. I've had some really tricky putts this week, some longer putts that double break. The ones that have been pretty basic, I've had fantastic speed on. Getting more and more comfortable on the shorter ones. I had to make a lot more putts from three to seven feet today than I had to yesterday, just given missed greens or being further away from the hole to start.

So it was actually kind of nice to make par that way versus just tapping in to kind of see a few more of those putts go in and gain as much confidence as possible this weekend.

Q. Now are you going to have a practice session this afternoon or just eat lunch and head home?

JORDAN SPIETH: No, I'll eat lunch. In my swing there was just a little bit of lack of early rotation going back, leaving to a slight more closed club face, and from

there it was pretty challenging for me to commit to all my shots, and that was different from yesterday. So I'm just going to go over to the range, and with a bag of balls, I should be able to get back on track. So I'll hit a few putts and a few balls.

Q. You said yesterday you probably would not be able to shoot another 63. So what was the game plan entering the second round?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, I really wanted to grab two a side. That's kind of my goal. I figured if I get two a side every nine holes that we play this week that will be 16-under, and that will win the golf tournament.

So I came out today trying to forget about yesterday and trying to make two birdies a side. It's tough. I made a double on a birdie hole. That throws you back a few shots. We rebounded nicely. Had an opportunity on the front to get to 10-under. That was our new goal. It fell just short, but in a good position. For an off day to shoot 1-under and hopefully that's the high score we post this week, that's where you need to hold it when you get a little off.

Q. I think a lot of people would take that. On the 13th hole, take us through that double and how you recovered after it?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, just trying to play a power fade off the bunkers and I just double crossed it. I hit a really good drive on the hole before, but I was playing a fade with the driver for the first time, and for the first time today. It's a tough tee shot early in a round, because I think instead of just looking at where I wanted to hit it, I was looking at where I didn't want to be.

So my width on my vision, the trouble came into play a little bit more. So I just didn't zero in on a target and just played a specific shot, but that happens at sometimes. You can still make par. Unfortunately, it was about three feet out of bounds. But hit a beautiful second drive. Made 7, went on, hit one close the next two holes and everything was fine. Just put a bad swing on it and you move on.

Q. You've been talking so much about your putting and the changes you've made. You said you wanted to make sure you got the feel right so you could focus on the speed and the line. Where are you with getting that process in place?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, pretty close. Trying each day to figure out how to get more and more comfortable. You know the mid-range game, I'm feeling a little bit better. I left a couple out to the right to finish, but from inside 10 feet I felt really good. I missed a short one on 14 today, but other than that I thought it was really solid.

I made a lot of three to seven-footers today, and I was able to knock them in and knock them in convincingly. So that was nice. Moving on, I've got to go put some more work in. I may as well grind these next two days. I've got a little break after this.

Q. Jordan, two more fairways, three less greens today. You made 29 putts. How would you describe today?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, a little off. I felt like off the tee I had less control today than yesterday even though I hit more fairways. So it was interesting that you mention that stat. It just didn't necessarily feel like that. But I ended up trying to force a couple shots when I didn't feel quite as good over the ball as yesterday, and that led to a couple mistakes.

The double was just a poor swing, a double cross where you're just hoping that's one of the ones you don't double cross. But, all in all, it was just a little off from yesterday, and one bad swing. Otherwise it was a pretty solid round.

Q. You've been in this position many times. Talk about the weekend. You feel good about your chances, obviously?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, you've got to stay patient. You can't force it here. You get so many opportunities, you feel like you're losing to the field if you don't birdie with a wedge in your hand. But they put these pins in such difficult locations it's hard to feed it next to it, once you do, it's difficult to get the right line on the green.

So recognizing that the course is 6800 yards for a reason. It's tricked out elsewhere. And being very patient on the weekend is key. I always mention that, that's always the word. I try to tell myself that, and sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Given here especially, given that we're going to have a lot of chances, greens in regulations is going to be an important stat.

Q. What do you take from the weekend after two days, you had a great round. This one wasn't so easy. What do you take from here the next two?

JORDAN SPIETH: Lot of positives. We'll go into tomorrow, I would imagine, in the last couple groups. But most likely one or two back, maybe three back. It looks like it's getting pretty tough this afternoon with winds. We might have gotten the good end of the draw.

Anyway, I'll probably be at or near the lead, which gives me a position where, unlike a lot of the positions I've been in this year where I feel like I can actually control my own destiny on the weekend. I've been kind of far

behind in a lot of the events in making comeback run. But being able to be towards the front of the pack on a Saturday afternoon is a beautiful position to be in and one that we'll certainly embrace. I'm going to try to have a lot of fun this weekend. The crowds are awesome.

Q. What's it say about your game that you haven't had your best stuff, but you're still leading the tournament?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, I didn't today, but yesterday was really good. I felt awesome over the ball, struck the ball beautifully and putted well too. Today, by comparing it to the way I've struck the ball the last, you know, four or five months, it was an off day, but it was still pretty solid. So I wouldn't say I played my B-game. I think I've been up there playing pretty solid golf. It's just, you know, hitting more greens. The ones I missed, I didn't really need to miss. I was trying to do too much. That's kind of what gets me in trouble on a course like this.

If I really just stay focused on a specific target that's a little late from the hole like I did yesterday and let the course come to us. That's where we start taking advantage.

Q. I think you said on Wednesday you felt like you only had two solid putting rounds. Have the last two days turned around?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, they've been right underneath those rounds. The couple rounds I'm talking about are like Saturday at Pebble Beach and Friday at Spy, and then I had, I think, the back nine Friday, Saturday at Colonial, and Sunday was good too. So those rounds were maybe just slightly ahead as far as comfort level and how I was stroking it. But they were very close.

Q. What's really strong about your game at the moment that you don't have to worry about?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I love the ability to work it both ways right now. It was just slightly off today. But tee to green, wedge play, it's all been really good. My putting, I think I've been 25th to 30th strokes gained for the year, and that's really good.

So I'm hard on myself, right? That's good and bad. But everything's pretty solid. I feel really good about our ball striking line.